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317.296
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1948

GREAT BRITAIN. COLONIAL OFFICE

Annual report on the
Turks and Caicos Islands

317.296
G798t



COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS

Turks & Caicos Islands 1948



LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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THE SERIES OF COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS
which was re-introduced for the year 1946 (after
suspension in 1940) is being continued with those
relating to 1948.

It is anticipated that the Colonies and Protectorates
for which 1948 Reports are being published will, with
some additions, be the same as for the previous year
(see list on cover page 3).

Gt. Brit. COLONIAL OFFICE.
**ANNUAL REPORT ON
THE TURKS AND
CAICOS ISLANDS
FOR THE YEAR
1948**

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MAP

**LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
1949**

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**Cover illustration :—Rebuilding a canal in the
Great Salina at Grand Turk.**

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PART I

Review of 1948

THE year 1948 was one of exceptional interest from many points of view. During January Dr. A. J. V. Underwood, a consultant chemical engineer, was sent out by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to review the plans made for reorganising and rehabilitating the salt industry and to prepare a report. Dr. Underwood was accompanied by Mr. D. M. Rait, the chief mechanical and electrical engineer of the Jamaica Public Works Department. A very thorough survey of the industry was carried out and an exceedingly interesting report was received in the early part of May. As a result of Dr. Underwood's report the Commissioner proceeded to London in May for consultations on the rehabilitation of the salt industry. At the same time he had discussions about the Dependency's Development Plan.

The salt industry has been declining for a number of years and its rehabilitation presents two main problems. The first of these is to bring the whole industry under unified control; the second is to secure the large funds needed to develop and modernise production and shipment of salt. The Commissioner's consultations in London on the salt industry were largely with a view to interesting the Colonial Development Corporation in taking over and running the industry. At the close of the year negotiations were in an advanced stage.

The Development Plan for the Dependency was also discussed in detail while the Commissioner was in London, and by the end of the year the Secretary of State had notified his approval of the Plan subject to certain provisos. The principal schemes provided for under the Development Plan are :

- (a) Agricultural improvement and experiment. Earlier agricultural schemes have been running since 1938 but have not proved as successful as had been hoped. It is therefore proposed to await the visit of an agricultural expert before formulating detailed projects. Meanwhile, funds have been ear-marked in the Plan for agricultural improvement and experiment and, together with those remaining under the earlier scheme, will be devoted to a new scheme based on up-to-date expert agricultural advice. It is expected that a visit by an agricultural expert will be possible in the early part of 1949.

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- (b) The improvement of the standard of education, particularly of elementary education. Elementary education is free and compulsory on the three principal islands but its standard is deplorably low, chiefly because of lack of funds. The education scheme provides for the appointment of supervisory staff, teacher training, improvement in salary scales and housing of teachers, and improvement and reconstruction of school buildings. It also provides for additional equipment for the schools. As a start, an extremely useful teacher-training course was held in June by a Senior Inspector of Schools from Jamaica. There is a growing realisation of the pressing need for better education in the Dependency and the local Board of Education was active throughout the year.
- (c) The complete reorganisation of the public health services. The existing buildings are deplorable and there is insufficient trained nursing staff. The one hospital at Grand Turk is far below the minimum acceptable standard, and the Medical Officer in the Caicos Islands works under great disadvantages. There is one clinic operating in the Caicos Islands in a rented building. The Plan provides for the training of nursing staff, the construction of two small modern hospitals at Grand Turk and South Caicos and of five clinics, one at Salt Cay in the Turks Islands and four in the Caicos Islands. Quarters have already been provided for the Medical Officers. The Plan also provides for the removal of lepers to Jamaica for segregation and treatment, and for an experiment in house construction.
- (d) The training of social welfare workers and the rehousing of juvenile delinquents ; plans for social welfare are very much limited by lack of funds.
- (e) Miscellaneous Schemes. This heading covers a number of exceedingly useful minor schemes. A new lantern was provided during 1948 for the Grand Turk Lighthouse, and an unattended flashing light is under construction in the United Kingdom and will be erected on Great Sand Cay. To complete the improvement in navigational aids new harbour lights have been ordered for the three ports of Grand Turk, Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour, and these are to be paid for from the funds of the Dependency. Another extremely useful minor scheme which was approved several years ago was for the extension of the sea wall at Grand Turk. The wall itself was completed before the end of 1948, but a certain amount of related work still remains to be done. The Plan also provides for a wireless receiving and transmitting set for the Caicos Islands and for additional staff required to implement the Development Plan.

The following is a financial summary of the Plan by heads :

<i>Head</i>	<i>Capital Expenditure</i>	<i>Recurrent Expenditure</i>	<i>Residual Recurrent Expenditure</i>
	£	£	£
Agriculture . . .	2,385	7,282	1,685
Education . . .	13,200	8,547	1,575
Public Health . . .	25,300	14,100	3,039
Salt Industry . . .	3,118	—	—
Social Welfare . . .	460	1,500	300
Miscellaneous . . .	13,598	7,360	605
	<u>£58,061</u>	<u>£38,789</u>	<u>£7,204</u>

**SUMMARY OF PLAN INCLUDING REORGANISATION OF THE
SALT INDUSTRY AND ALLOCATION TO RESERVE :**

Capital . . .	58,061
Recurrent . . .	38,789
Reserve . . .	3,150
Salt Industry . . .	50,000
	<u>£150,000</u>

The most significant figure is that showing the estimated residual annually recurrent expenditure after the cessation of assistance from Colonial Development and Welfare funds. In effect, a sum of more than £7,000 a year must be found by the Dependency when the schemes for improving social and other services have expired in five years' time. It is extraordinarily difficult to forecast future revenue in the case of a Dependency with a small annual budget. All that can be said is that after careful calculation it appears that the Dependency will be able to bear the added financial burden. The standard of living, of social services and the general level of amenities in these islands is still very low, but there has undoubtedly been a great improvement in the economy of the islands due largely to the much greater salt exports. If the plans for expansion of the industry are successful, there should be a further great improvement in the economic position of the islands and in the standard of living.

A 16 millimetre cinema projector was donated by the British Council during 1948 but had not arrived at the close of the year.

The Turks and Caicos Islands were separated from the Bahama Islands in the year 1848 and a short issue of seven postage stamps was brought out in December to commemorate the centenary.

PART II

Chapter I : Population

THE last census was taken in 1943 when the population of the Dependency was 6,138.

Persons of African descent	4,081
Persons of mixed descent	1,935
Persons of European descent	122

The estimated population in 1948 was 6,500. Females exceed males in number.

The population of the principal islands is estimated to be :

Grand Turk	1,800
Salt Cay	400
Cockburn Harbour (South Caicos)	800
Bottle Creek (North Caicos)	1,600

The births and deaths registered during the last eight years were as follows :

	<i>Number of Births</i>	<i>Number of Deaths</i>	<i>Birth-rate per 1,000</i>	<i>Death rate per 1,000</i>
1941	215	131	38.6	23.54
1942	223	103	42.1	19.5
1943	244	103	39.7	16.8
1944	209	99	34	16.1
1945	249	234	38.9	36.54
1946	204	93	31.3	14.3
1947	220	82	36.7	13.4
1948	195	88	30	13.5

The rates up to 1942 are based on the census of 1921, and from 1943 on the census of 1943. The number of females exceeded the number of males by 19.9 per cent. at the time of the census.

The number of deaths of children under one year of age in 1948 was 25, equal to a death-rate of 128.2 per 1,000 births ; and in 1947 the corresponding figures were 26 and 118.2 per 1,000. Thirty-six marriages were registered in 1948.

The emigration and immigration figures for the year under review were :

Entered	173
Departed	289

Chapter 2 : Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation

The demand for labour is principally confined to that required in connection with the salt industry and does not exceed 200 men. The demand is to some extent seasonal. But the much greater exports of the last two years have tended to make work in the industry almost continual. One of the principal reasons for the proposal to rehabilitate this industry and bring it under unified control is the need to provide regular and better-paid employment. The difficulty in raising wages to allow for the great increase in the cost of living lies in the continuing low world price of salt. The actual shipping of salt requires considerable additional labour which is found by the temporary employment of fishermen, artisans, tailors and the like. Rates paid for shipping are good and the supply of this casual labour exceeds the demand. Some women are employed, when salt is shipped, to fill the small half-bushel bags which are used for loading lighters. The employment of women for this work is, however, less common than formerly.

There was an increased amount of employment on steamers, and some labour is required by the salt industry at Inagua and in the lumber industry at Abaco, both in the Bahamas. Unemployment has been severe for many years, and there is a tendency for the best men to leave the Dependency whenever a chance of employment elsewhere occurs. The improvement in employment in 1947 continued during 1948.

Employers are not responsible for housing or feeding their employees. There is no workmen's compensation act (one is now in preparation) or unemployment insurance scheme. There is a Minimum Wages Ordinance. There has been a tendency for wages to rise and the general level is well above the legal minimum rates.

The average rate of wages for labourers employed in raking and carting salt is from 4s. 6d. to 5s. a day of nine hours and from 10s. to 15s. a day when shipping it. Carpenters and blacksmiths earn from 7s. to 10s. a day of nine hours. The few lorry drivers earn 7s. to 8s. a day.

In domestic service the wages vary from 30s. to 50s. a month for female servants, usually with rations. Employment of males as butlers, etc., is now rare. Payment of wages in goods from the stores of the salt proprietors is no longer prevalent.

The cost of living has risen by about 100 per cent. since the outbreak of war, and in the same period labourers' wages have risen about 70 per cent. Since 1942, His Majesty's Government has generously granted an annual subsidy. But for the subsidy so far granted, the cost of living would have mounted to 140 per cent. above pre-war prices. The biggest single cause of the increase has been the impossibility of obtaining direct shipments of foodstuffs from Canada and the United States of America which were the natural sources of supply in pre-war years. Until recently, all supplies

have had to be obtained from Jamaica. Handling and trans-shipment from Jamaica is estimated to increase the cost of items imported by about 30 per cent. over the direct landed cost. During 1948, however, a limited amount of direct shipment from New York was carried out with immediate savings in landed costs.

Chapter 3: Public Finance and Taxation

The following table shows the totals of revenue and expenditure in the last five years :

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	£	£
1944-45	34,815	30,562
1945-46	64,069	53,307
1946-47	61,701	69,945
1947-48 (Revised Estimate)	39,838	50,760
1948-49 (Estimate)	56,773	46,805

The financial year 1948-49 opened with a deficit of £4,738 and is expected to close with a surplus of £5,230. The depletion of the surplus funds of the Dependency was largely due to expenditure on hurricane relief.

There is no public debt, but the operations of the Food Control Department are financed by an interest bearing advance made by the Jamaica Treasury.

The main items of revenue for the financial year 1948-49 are estimated as follows :

	£
Customs Duties	10,502
Royalty on Salt	4,500
Port Dues	800
Internal Revenue	945
Fees of Court and Office	245
Departmental Revenue	230
Reimbursements	1,459
Post Office	25,225
Interest	100
Miscellaneous Receipts	875
Colonial Development and Welfare	10,842
Extraordinary Revenue	1,050

The main items of expenditure for the financial year 1948-49 are estimated as follows :

	£
Pensions	647
Commissioner's Department	4,550
Treasury and Customs	3,201
Judicial Department	1,063
Police and Prisons	2,389

	£
Prisons	1,444
Medical Department	4,407
Paupers and Lunatics	1,200
Education	2,472
Miscellaneous	1,630
Post Office	2,641
Lighthouse Department	471
Savings Bank	387
Public Works Department	635
Public Works Recurrent	2,905
Colonial Development and Welfare	10,242
Extraordinary Expenditure	6,251

Direct taxation is light as there is no income tax, but a considerable amount of new taxation is being introduced. Stamp Duty was first imposed in 1948.

The principal sources of revenue are the customs import duties and the royalty on salt exported. Stamp sales were high in 1948.

The Customs Tariff was amended in March, 1932, when a British preferential tariff was introduced for the first time. The specific duties are low in comparison with similar duties levied in most of the other Colonies. All goods not particularly specified nor included in the free list pay duty as follows :

British Preferential Tariff	10 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i>
General Tariff	15 per cent. <i>ad valorem</i>

The financial position of the Dependency continues sound. This is partly due to the continuing sale of stamps but also to the buoyant customs receipts and to the increasing volume and value of salt exports. Prospects for 1949 are especially good as regards stamp sales, but the financial position of the Dependency is, even apart from this, far more healthy than for many years due to the increasing amount of employment and the increased value of exports, both visible and invisible in the form of earnings of men employed outside the Dependency, who send remittances to their families.

Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

At 31st December, 1948, there were 1,296 accounts in operation in the Government Savings Bank with £54,179 16s. 8d. to the credit of depositors. Deposits and withdrawals were £21,555 and £21,279 respectively. Interest paid to depositors was £1,237 5s. 0d. The book value of investments at 31st December was £53,244 3s. 0d. The increase of Savings Bank business is indicated by the following comparison : amount due to depositors 31st December, 1938, was £12,072 4s. 5d. while at 31st December, 1948, it was £54,179 16s. 8d.

Jamaica currency notes and British silver of all denominations are in circulation.

Chapter 5: Commerce

The value of the trade of these Islands during the last six years was as follows :

	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Imports .	£70,163	£58,272	£93,731	£60,864	£72,244	£82,756
Exports .	£12,646	£14,367	£21,293	£31,891	£55,501	£62,415

IMPORTS

The following table shows the value and origin of imports in the last six years :

	United Kingdom	Other parts of the British Empire	Foreign countries	Total
	£	£	£	£
1943 . . .	13,113	44,209	12,841	70,163
1944 . . .	740	40,527	17,005	58,272
1945 . . .	330	78,440	14,961	93,731
1946 . . .	509	50,965	9,390	60,864
1947 . . .	1,116	54,882	16,246	72,244
1948 . . .	622	52,831	29,303	82,756

In 1948 65 per cent. of imports were from the British Empire and 35 per cent. from foreign countries.

The following is a classified summary of the imports for the year 1948 showing the percentage supplied by the British Empire and by foreign countries :

	1948	British Empire	Foreign countries
	£	%	%
Food, drink and tobacco .	52,922	68	32
Raw materials .	11,369	41	59
Manufactured articles .	15,310	68	32
Unclassified . . .	3,155	67	33
TOTAL . . .	£82,756		

EXPORTS

During 1948 the declared value of the exports of the Dependency was £62,415. This includes the value of re-exports which was negligible, consisting only of a small amount of ships' stores.

The following table shows the direction of the domestic exports in the last six years :

	United Kingdom	Other parts of the British Empire	Foreign countries	Total
	£	£	£	£
1943 . . .	—	8,743	3,903	12,646
1944 . . .	—	10,500	3,867	14,367
1945 . . .	—	17,607	3,686	21,293
1946 . . .	5	26,704	5,187	31,896
1947 . . .	—	23,627	31,874	55,501
1948 . . .	—	25,448	36,967	62,415

Of exports in 1948 40·8 per cent. were sent to the Empire and 59·2 per cent. to foreign countries.

To the value of visible exports may be added remittances received from men working in the Bahamas and at Curacao for the support of

their families which totalled £12,987 for the year, giving a total export figure of £75,402. This figure, when compared with the total value of imports for the same period of £82,756, reveals a small adverse trade balance of £7,354, a far more favourable picture than for many years.

Chapter 6: Production

The principal industry in this Dependency is the production of salt from sea water by solar evaporation. The industry is carried on at three centres, Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos. The output, which over the past 25 years has averaged about 43,000 tons annually, is the product of salinas belonging to private proprietors. The salt is shipped to Canada and the United States of America, and is used there for fish-curing and meat-packing. Large exports are made to Japan for human consumption and for industrial purposes. It is also shipped to Jamaica. Efforts are being made to extend the markets. Turks Islands salt was famous for its purity and it had an excellent reputation in the markets of the countries mentioned above. The industry has declined of recent years due to the splitting up of salinas into small holdings, loss of markets during the war, a decline in purity of the salt produced, and lack of capital for the re-design of salinas and for the improvement of loading facilities and lighters. As one result of an investigation made in 1945, there has been a steady improvement in the quality of salt produced in the larger salinas.

Co-operation between lighter owners has gone some way to speed up loading cargoes into vessels. The complete rehabilitation of the industry and the possibility of bringing it under public ownership was being actively explored during 1948. Three grades of salt are exported: coarse, the natural product of the salina; fishery, a grade processed to a fineness suitable for the curing of fish; and industrial, fine ground, suitable for dairy and similar uses. The coarse and fishery grades are largely shipped in bulk: the industrial is bagged.

Thirty-eight thousand tons of salt were raked in 1948. The price of salt improved slightly during the year. At the close of the year about 33,000 tons of producers' stocks were in hand.

The following table shows the destination, quantity and value of the salt shipments in 1948:

<i>Destination</i>	<i>Quantity (tons)</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Jamaica	5,924	12,176
Canada	3,039	3,174
Newfoundland	11,909	12,384
United States	3,130	3,192
Japan	46,683	26,847
TOTAL	70,685	£57,773

The average price received per ton for the salt rose from 14s. in 1947 to about 16s. 4d.

There were no large exports of sponge during the year, but the improved conditions of the banks, which were depleted by disease in the early part of the war, encourages the belief that this industry can be revived within a few years.

Agriculture is mainly confined to the Caicos Islands, where the people can, in a good year, produce sufficient corn, fruit and vegetables to maintain themselves and sell a surplus at the main settlements. On the Turks Islands group very little is grown and the people have to rely mainly on the wages obtained from the salt industry to purchase imported food. Again this year, owing to the severe droughts, the crops were below average.

In years past the exports of sisal and cotton were of considerable value to the Dependency. The fall in prices and failure to produce the first quality resulted in the closing down of the plantations. An attempt is being made to revive sisal growing as a peasant industry, and a few trial shipments of hand cleaned sisal have been made to New York and Jamaica. The scattered nature of the sisal farms, poor transportation and lack of fresh water for cleaning the fibre are all serious difficulties. There are, however, considerable hopes that output can be increased and quality improved during 1949.

The export of crawfish to the United States of America was resumed late in the year. Careful control is being exercised to avoid depletion of the banks. The industry is capable of considerable expansion.

The following table shows the quantity and value of the principal items of domestic produce exported during the last six years :

	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Salt						
Tons	7,873	8,896	11,892	19,541	70,340	70,685
value	£8,535	£10,499	£14,370	£25,737	£49,869	£57,773
Sponge						
lb.	—	770	—	—	300	—
value	—	£250	—	—	£10	—
Conchs						
No.	3,880,370	3,518,090	3,169,300	3,353,850	3,631,750	3,149,322
value	£3,880	£3,518	£3,170	£3,354	£3,632	£3,149
Sisal						
lb.	17,920	—	—	—	—	23,435
value	£208	—	—	—	—	£293
Sisal Rope						
lb.	—	—	89,957	54,500	—	—
value	—	—	£3,610	£2,800	—	—
Crawfish						
No.	—	—	—	—	80,000	48,000
value	—	—	—	—	£2,000	£1,200

Note : 30 bushels of coarse salt or 28 bushels of fishery grade salt equal 1 ton.

ISSUE OF STAMPS
 COMMEMORATING A
 CENTURY OF LOCAL
 GOVERNMENT SINCE
 THE SEPARATION OF
 THE TURKS & CAICOS
 ISLANDS FROM THE
 BAHAMAS COLONY





With acknowledgments to The Hon. F. B. Harriott

A CORNER OF SALT CAY SHOWING THE TOWN SALINA



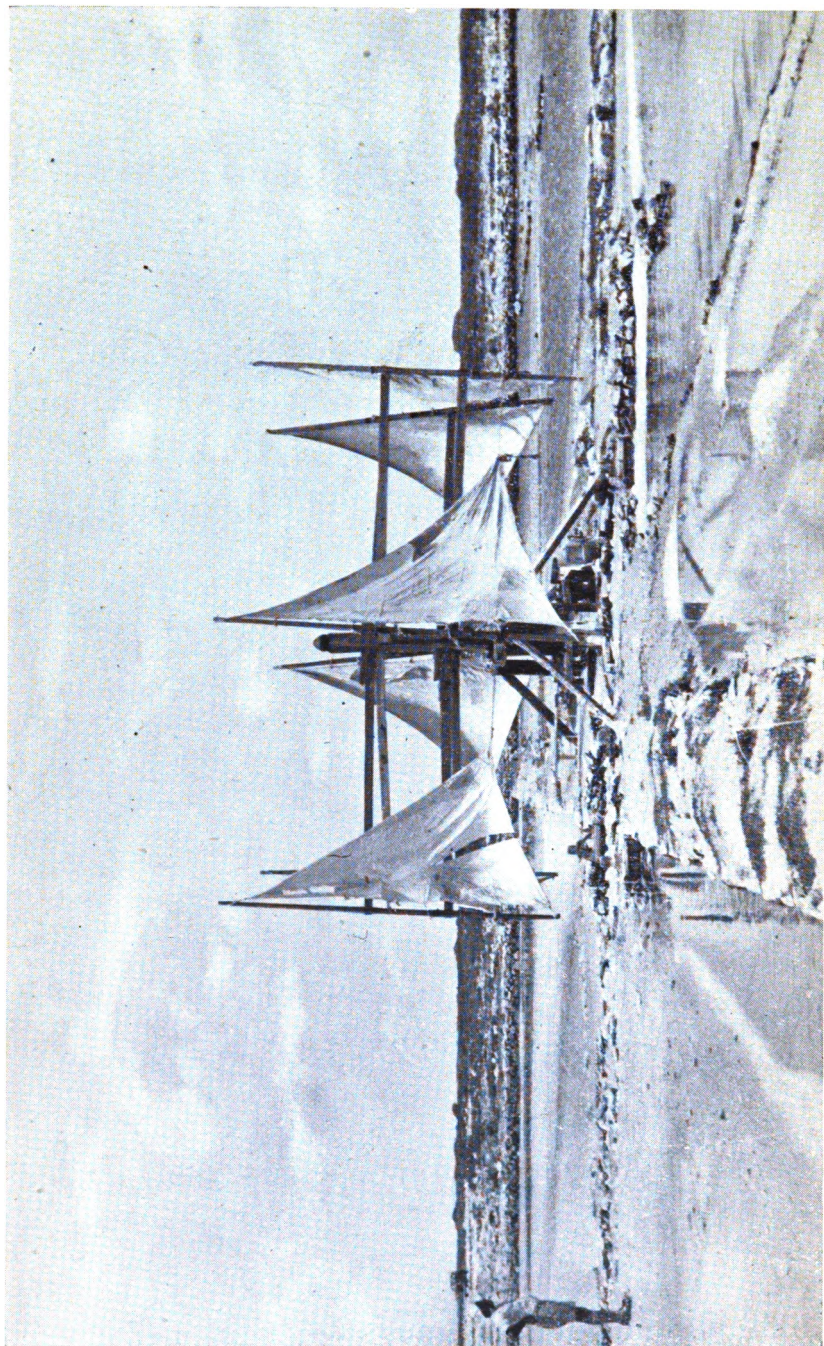
COCKBURN HARBOUR, MAIN SALT-PRODUCING ISLAND



LOADING SALT



THE NEW GOVERNMENT LAUNCH: *President Forth*



MERRY-GO-ROUND

Last of the old-time windmill paddle-type pumps. The entire structure (including gear teeth) is of wood

Chapter 7: Social Services

EDUCATION

The education system of the Dependency is under the direction of the Board of Education, nominated by the Commissioner, who is chairman.

Primary education is provided by the Government free of charge. It is compulsory in the three principal settlements of the Dependency, namely, Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour, for children between the ages of seven and 14 years, but it is not compulsory in the out-lying Caicos Islands, where it is not possible to maintain schools to meet the requirements of some of the small isolated communities.

The Board of Education receives an annual grant from the Government. There are 11 elementary schools.

In 1948 the number of scholars whose names were enrolled was 894, and the average attendance was 612. There were also two private elementary schools with a total of 19 pupils. While the average attendance appears to be small, it should be remembered that the settlements in the Caicos Islands are scattered and many children are not within reach of a school. Many who do attend have to walk long distances in great heat and along bad roads.

Owing to the very small salaries offered and the lack of proper training facilities, there is great difficulty in obtaining efficient teachers for the schools and very few of those employed can be regarded as being really competent. Improvement in the standard of school buildings, equipment, sanitation, playing grounds, etc., is badly needed and a grant for these purposes is envisaged in the Development Plan (see pages 4-5). Improvements in teachers' salaries and the provision of teacher-training courses are planned.

During the year teachers' salaries were increased by a larger "carrying on allowance" and the lowest salaries revised. There was a modest improvement in the supply of books and equipment. A great deal remains to be done before the conditions can be regarded as even reasonably satisfactory.

An excellent short teachers' refresher course was held in June under a Senior Inspector of Schools from Jamaica.

There is a Senior Government School at Grand Turk. In 1948 there were 28 pupils on the roll, and the average attendance was 26. A centre for the Cambridge University Local Examinations was established at Grand Turk in 1924, and local examinations have been held annually, with generally satisfactory results.

No technical education is provided in this Dependency, nor are there any evening classes.

Over 90 per cent. of the Dependency's population is literate, and there is a good public library and free reading room at Grand Turk. It is well stocked with books and provides a good assortment of current papers and magazines. Generous assistance has been given by the British Council. Sub-libraries were opened at six other centres.

HEALTH

The principal cause of death in this Dependency is old age. Of 39 deaths in Grand Turk during the year 46 per cent. were due to senile degenerative changes mainly of the cardio-vascular system. Malnutrition and avitaminosis particularly of the B complex group vitamins is common among the population. The mortality, however, from these is lower due to the use of food yeast.

During the drought season a marked increase of the number of flies coupled with poor sanitation in certain of the poorer districts caused for a period an infective type of diarrhoea, particularly among children, characterised by a "green stool." Clinically this resembles the sonne type of dysentery. The eye condition of pterygium is to be found in the salt making districts of these Islands caused by the excessive glare from the roads and salt heaps. Plans are under consideration for the supply of dark glasses to salt workers at a low price.

Infectious Diseases

There were some cases of suspected typhoid fever with two recorded deaths during the year. A possible widespread outbreak was checked by the prompt inoculation against this disease with T.A.B. vaccine. A total of 478 persons (adults and children) were inoculated in Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour. The predisposing factors were a severe drought necessitating the use of possibly contaminated drinking water, the excessive number of flies, and the poor state of some latrines. Malaria is almost non-existent except in the Caicos Islands.

Prevention and Treatment

The introduction and liberal distribution of food yeast throughout the Dependency has greatly aided the fight against vitamin deficiency of the B complex group of vitamins. The high protein value of this food has greatly reduced malnutrition, particularly among children. Cod liver oil is also freely supplied not only to children but also to expectant mothers who are instructed in the value of its use. Welfare clinics are helping in this work.

Nursing Care

There has been some improvement with the return to the Island of two local Jamaica-trained nurses who also took a course in public health. It is planned that, when a sufficient number are available and when clinics are built, a Public Health Nurse will be sent to work in each of the islands.

Hospitals

The only hospital in the Dependency is the Manning Hospital situated at Grand Turk. This is a 15-bed hospital of which only four beds are reserved for urgent medical and surgical cases, the remaining beds are used for paupers. There is also an operating theatre attached

to the hospital. Despite disadvantages, excellent work has been done by the Medical Staff attached to this hospital. Credit must be ascribed to the healthy climate, care and skill of the medical and nursing staff. Plans have been prepared for the erection of a cottage hospital at Grand Turk to which will be attached a dental officer (Government) along with the Medical Officer. It is also the intention of the Government to build a cottage hospital at Cockburn Harbour. In the lower settlements of the Caicos Islands there is a welfare clinic and small maternity ward with a trained midwife in attendance.

Drainage Works

There are no swamps in the larger islands and no drainage is necessary.

Water Supplies

The water supply of the islands is provided by tanks. These are regularly inspected and kept in a clean condition. This source of supply becomes inadequate during the long dry season and use is then made of one or two deep wells to be found in the island. There are also some shallow wells which provide a water supply for cattle. The catchments for the Public Tanks are to be improved and increased in area.

Sanitation

The main type of latrine used throughout the islands is the pit latrine. There is no sewage system. The pit latrines are in good condition and regularly inspected by the Sanitary Inspector. Unfortunately there has of necessity to be stables for animals in the town, and these act as breeding places for flies. Good results have been obtained by spraying stables and latrines with D.D.T.

HOUSING

According to the 1943 census there were 1,365 dwelling-houses in these islands; 889 were built of wood, 446 of stone, and 30 were of other construction. During the hurricane of 1945 the number of dwelling-houses destroyed was 536 and the number damaged was 754. Rehabilitation is now completed; 233 houses have been rebuilt and 369 damaged houses repaired. Materials have been supplied to assist owners to repair their own houses in an additional 104 cases. The total cost was £27,757.

Nearly all the wage-earning population live in small houses of two or three rooms with small outhouses nearby serving as kitchen, latrine, etc., and with very few exceptions they own the houses which they occupy. The sanitary conditions are fair. The Sanitary Inspector and the Police see that the requirements of the sanitary laws are observed. The Sanitary Inspector was appointed late in 1946.

There is no building law and the people are free to build as they please. A complete revision of the out-of-date public health legislation and the introduction of building regulations is under consideration.

There is no property tax in this Dependency but the necessary legislation to impose one is in draft. There are no building societies.

There are no barracks, compounds or tenement houses, and there is no apparent need for additional dwellings, although some are in very poor condition. A small grant will be asked for under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act for the construction of experimental working-class cottages. The object is to produce model cottages which are inexpensive, hurricane resistant and in line with modern health requirements.

SOCIAL WELFARE

There has so far been little social welfare activity. This has been due to the smallness of the population of these Islands, the scattered nature of the settlements and the depressed economic conditions which have prevailed for a number of years. Lack of employment and the almost complete absence of any of the amenities of larger communities, such as sport, cinemas, dances and the like, has caused many of the younger people to leave the Islands in search of work and more congenial surroundings. An improvement in the economic life of the Dependency provides the only real solution. The rehabilitation of the salt industry and the encouragement and revival of several minor industries is being actively pursued, but these are long-term projects. A considerable improvement should, however, be effected during 1949 as the British Council has donated an excellent 16 millimetre cinema projector. It is hoped to secure a second projector during 1949, and to effect improvements to sports grounds. It is proposed to utilise the village schools in the out-lying settlements as simple community centres. As a start six sub-libraries have been set up, affiliated to the Victoria Library at Grand Turk. As soon as funds permit, it is hoped to have selected persons trained in social welfare work.

There is no Government insurance against old age, unemployment or sickness, but relief is granted in necessitous cases and cost about £1,200 in 1948.

There are seven friendly societies (including Freemasons, Odd Fellows, Good Templars, Good Samaritans and Shepherds) which do much good work in giving assistance and relief to their members in cases of distress, sickness and death.

The after-care of prisoners was formerly left to private charity and little was done to combat juvenile delinquency. As a result of the recommendations of the Prison Board and of the ministers of the three principal religious denominations, some improvement was effected in 1948.

Chapter 8: Legislation

Fifteen Ordinances were passed by the Legislative Board during the year. These were :

No. 1. The General Revenue Appropriation (1947-48) Ordinance, 1947.

- No. 2. The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 3. The Infanticide Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 4. Sentence of Death (Expectant Mothers) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 5. Fractions of a Penny (Elimination) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 6. The Stamp Duty Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 7. Magistrates' Code of Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 8. Supplementary Appropriation (1945-46) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 9. Tonnage Tax Ordinance, 1948.
- No. 10. Summary Offences (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 11. Supplementary Appropriation (1944-45) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1948.
- No. 12. Witnesses Expenses Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 13. Offences against the Person (Amendment) Ordinance, 1948.
- No. 14. General Revenue Appropriation (1948-49) Ordinance, 1948.
- No. 15. Larceny Ordinance, 1948.

A Workmen's Compensation Ordinance is being drafted and will be enacted early in 1949. During 1948, cases of injury received whilst shipping His Majesty's Government's salt were treated in the same manner as if legislation were already in force.

Chapter 9: Justice, Police and Prisons

The law in force in the Dependency consists of the common law of England as it existed at the time of the settlement, certain applied Acts of the Imperial Parliament and of the Bahamas Legislature, and the Ordinances passed by the local Legislature. By the Order in Council of 1873 the Legislature of Jamaica is empowered to extend to the Dependency legislation passed by it.

The Supreme Court is presided over by a Judge. The Supreme Court of Judicature of Jamaica has jurisdiction in matrimonial and divorce causes and is constituted a Court of Appeal from the Supreme Court of the Dependency. By virtue of the Turks and Caicos Islands Divorce Law, 1943, jurisdiction in matrimonial and divorce causes has also been conferred on the Supreme Court.

The operation of the jury system, as is frequently the case in small communities where the standard of education is low, is open at times to legitimate criticism.

There are three Magistrates' Courts, namely, Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour.

The Police Force consists of three non-commissioned officers and seven police constables. The sergeant is seconded from the Jamaica Constabulary Force. In addition, special constables are continuously employed at Grand Turk, Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour. In the Caicos Islands there is a district constable at each of the eight

principal settlements. The training of locally recruited constables in Jamaica has been re-started.

There is a central prison at Grand Turk, into which prisoners sentenced to terms of less than 12 months' imprisonment are received. Prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment of 12 months and more are sent to the General Penitentiary, Jamaica. There is a lock-up at Cockburn Harbour, where prisoners from the Caicos Islands may be imprisoned for a term not exceeding 14 days. A considerable improvement in prison conditions is planned and will be implemented in 1949.

Juvenile delinquents are also received at the Central Prison, but occupy a separate building from that of the adult prisoners. Most of the time of the juvenile delinquents is spent outside the prison in the pursuit of education, in recreation and in learning trades. They are under the supervision of the Prison Board. The Magistrate, as Chairman of the Board, exercises close personal supervision; even so, much remains to be done before the care of juvenile delinquents can be considered satisfactory.

The central prison is a large, well-constructed stone building with ample accommodation and is kept in good order and sanitary condition. There is complete separation between male and female inmates. There are 10 cells for males and four for females, and no associated wards. Each prisoner has 70 square feet of area and over 1,000 cubic feet of space during sleeping hours. There is no penal labour in force. The male prisoners are employed in the breaking of stones and work of a general nature on Government property. The prisoners are well fed and are allowed 11 hours for sleep. The Medical Officer visits the prison regularly, and the ministers of the various religious bodies also regularly hold divine services there.

The Magistrate at Grand Turk acts as Inspector of the prison. There are a gaoler, three warders, a matron and a cook. The matron supervises the female prisoners and the juvenile delinquents. There is a Prison Board which meets once a month to inspect and supervise the prison.

The crime statistics for 1948 were :

Number of crimes reported or known to Police	365
Number of crimes brought before Magistrate	268
Number of cases dropped	95
Number of persons proceeded against (male)	260
(female)	162
Number of persons apprehended	106
Number of persons summoned	238
Number discharged	102
Number summarily convicted	322
Number imprisoned	31
Number whipped	4
Number fined	229
Number bound over	58

Convictions were as follows :

Offences against the person	51
Praedial larceny	2
Malicious injury to property	9
Other offences against property	29
Miscellaneous minor offences	219
Other crimes	24
Offences against Revenue, etc.	4

Chapter 10: Public Utilities and Public Works

There are no public utilities in the normally accepted sense. Owing to the nature of the Islands, almost all water used for drinking and washing is rainwater stored in private and public tanks. There are 12 public tanks with a total capacity of 507,000 gallons situated as follows :

	<i>Number of Tanks</i>	<i>Gallons</i>
Grand Turk'	5	355,000
Salt Cay	3	36,000
South Caicos (Cockburn Harbour)	2	72,000
Kew	1	40,000
Blue Hills	1	4,000
TOTAL	12	507,000

Drinking water is sold at 1d. for 4 gallons and frequently has to be rationed during dry periods. There are also a number of Government wells. A programme of extending and repairing catchment areas and of increasing water storage is being pursued as fast as funds permit. A 60,000 gallon tank has been purchased at Cockburn Harbour and is being reconditioned. The catchment areas in all the Islands were repaired and the area of the catchment for the North Tanks at Grand Turk was increased during the year.

The small Public Works Department comprises a Building Supervisor paid under a Development grant and a Mechanical Superintendent. Almost all work is done by contract and a surprising amount of useful work is done inexpensively by this small organisation which is all the Dependency can afford. The work includes the normal care and maintenance of public buildings, roads, bridges, wharves, trucks, and also the maintenance of telephones, radio-telephone, electric charging plants and a host of other minor jobs. The Dependency's rapid advance from the immemorial regime of the sail lighter and the mule cart presents many problems and the maintenance of an increasing flow of new equipment is not the least of them.

Chapter II : Communications

Before the war there was a regular steamship service between Grand Turk and the United States of America operated by the Royal Netherlands Steamship Company. Elders and Fyffes steamers also called occasionally to disembark passengers and mails from the United Kingdom and to embark passengers and mails for Jamaica. During the war direct services ceased and the only regular service for several years has been by the m.v. *Kirksons*. This vessel sails at approximately monthly intervals between Grand Turk and Jamaica and carries general cargo, mails and passengers.

There are three ports of entry, namely, Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour. Each port has an open roadstead and ships anchor at a short distance from the shore.

At the end of the year there were 107 registered vessels owned in the Dependency, totalling 1,456 tons. The number of vessels that entered the several ports during the year was as follows :

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Net Tonnage</i>
Total shipping entered	229	64,806

There is constant communication between the Dependency, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and the Bahamas Islands by small sailing vessels engaged in trade.

Internal mails are carried between the several islands by small sailing craft engaged in local trade.

An air service between the Dependency and Jamaica was again attempted in 1948 and trial flights proved successful. There is also a fortnightly despatch of airmail via Haiti.

Mails to and from Europe are despatched and received via Jamaica. The Post Office dealt with about 186,850 postal articles during the year.

Grand Turk is an important cable junction, there being cables to Jamaica, Barbados and Bermuda. The Cable Company supplies a news bulletin daily, for which the Government pays a subsidy.

The Government radio-telephone system provides, in co-operation with Cable and Wireless Ltd., service between Grand Turk, Salt Cay, and Cockburn Harbour.

Before the hurricane of 1945 there was a small Government-operated telephone service at Grand Turk ; there were 12 connections to Government quarters, offices, hospital, etc., and 16 private connections. The telephone system was destroyed in the hurricane but has now been reconstructed and is to be further extended.

There are no overland telegraphs, their place being taken by radio-telephone.

The streets and roads in the principal settlements were kept in good condition during the year. A few motor cars and motor trucks are in use. The so-called roads in the Caicos Islands are only bush paths.

There are no railways, tramways or omnibuses.

PART III

Chapter I : Geography and Climate

THE Turks and Caicos Islands lie between 21° and 22° north latitude and 71° and $72^{\circ} 50'$ west longitude, at the south-east end of the Bahama Islands. They lie about 90 miles to the north of the Dominican Republic, about 720 miles to the south-west of Bermuda, and about 450 miles to the north-east of Jamaica.

They consist of two groups of islands, separated by a deep-water channel about 22 miles wide, known as the Turks Islands passage. The Turks Islands lie to the east of the passage and the Caicos Islands to the west. The area of these Islands is estimated to be about 166 square miles, but no thorough survey of the group has ever been made.

The Turks Islands consist of two inhabited islands, Grand Turk and Salt Cay, four uninhabited islands, and a large number of rocks. A three-pointed bank of reef surrounds the group.

The Caicos Islands which lie to the west of the channel, surround the Caicos Bank, a triangular shoal about 58 miles long on its northern side, and 56 miles long on its eastern and western sides, respectively.

In his *Survey of Sponge Grounds* (1938), Dr. H. H. Brown describes the geological structure of the Caicos Bank as precisely similar to that of the Bahamas. "A flat-topped rock rises steeply from the ocean bed consisting entirely of aeolian limestone of tertiary origin; this rock mass comprises the whole Caicos Banks and Cays and is similar to other rock masses of the Bahama group."

The northern and eastern sides of the Bank are bounded by a chain of islands separated from each other by narrow passages. The principal islands of the Caicos group are South Caicos, East Caicos, Middle Caicos, North Caicos, Providenciales Island, and West Caicos.

At a varying distance from the ocean coast line of these islands there is an almost continuous barrier reef. Dr. Brown writes: "This reef of living coral is superimposed on the edge of the limestone land mass. Within the reef the boat channel is full of sunken coral heads and boilers on which the seas break heavily. It is therefore very dangerous to navigate." On the islands "the limestone is weathered into the familiar Bahamian honeycomb rock in the interstices of which there are little pockets of soil which support a vigorous growth of bush." On the bank coast of these islands there is found "a mangrove and seawater swamp which is intersected by a series of shallow creeks. The basis of the swamp consists of a covering of

white marl over the underlying limestone. This marl is composed of almost pure calcium carbonate and had resulted from the breaking down of the limestone rock." Dr. Brown divides the bed of the bank into four areas lying roughly from east to west. The first beginning from the north consists of white mud or marl under some three or four feet of water. The second, a zone of sandy mud in water up to a fathom in depth. The third, a zone of shell gravel and scattered bars known locally as "The Bank." "The ground had enough sand and mud to bind with the abundant shells into a stable surface, which is not shifted or stirred up by currents and high winds; it can, therefore, support a rich flora and fauna, patches of eel grass and burrowing animals (*Annelida Mollusca* and *Crustacea*). Shells of mollusca are abundant in the surface."

The last zone under shallow water consists of clean shifting biologically barren sand, which in places is dry at low tide.

At the southern and south-western edge of the bank is found "the barrier reef from the edge of which soundings drop down with spectacular suddenness."

The entire group known as the Turks and Caicos Islands extend for a distance of 75 miles from east to west and 50 miles from north to south.

The climate may be classed as good. The temperature ranges throughout the year from 60° minimum to 90° maximum. Although the period from April to November is generally hot, the heat is somewhat tempered by the prevailing trade winds. The weather from December is generally pleasant. At Grand Turk the average rainfall for the last five years has been 29.51 inches. The rainfall for 1948 was 20.12 and the maximum and minimum temperature was 92° and 64° with a mean maximum and minimum of 88° and 70.7°.

The islands have suffered periodically from the effects of terrible hurricanes. The hurricane of 1945 caused great destruction owing to the velocity of the wind which exceeded 150 miles an hour, but as the wind came from the east there was no damage due to heavy seas.

Chapter 2: History

It is said that the Turks Islands derived their name from a species of cactus found there by the first settlers, the scarlet head of which resembles a Turkish fez. These islands were discovered in 1512 by Juan Ponce de Leon while on a voyage from Puerto Rico. They remained uninhabited until the year 1678, when a party of Bermudians arrived and established the salt-raking industry. From that date onwards parties of Bermudians used to resort annually to the Turks Islands to rake salt, arriving about March and returning to Bermuda about November, when the salt-raking season was over. The Bermudians were expelled by the Spaniards in 1710, but soon returned and continued the salt industry, with occasional interruptions by Spanish attacks. Several attempts to obtain possession of

the islands were also made by the French. Then, in the year 1766, an agent, Mr. Andrew Symmer, was appointed "to reside there, and, by his residence on the spot, to insure the right of the Islands to His Majesty." By an Order in Council of 1781 regulations were approved for the management of the salinas (salt ponds) and for the preservation of order amongst the inhabitants. In 1799 the Turks and Caicos Islands were placed under the Bahamas Government, and so they remained until 1848, when, in answer to a petition from the inhabitants, a separate charter was granted. Under this charter the islands had an elective Legislative Council and a President administering the Government. This system was found to be too expensive, and in 1873 the inhabitants forwarded a petition praying for the abrogation of the charter. The islands were then annexed to Jamaica, and still remain one of its dependencies. The Dependency is now administered by a Commissioner assisted by a Legislative Board.

The Turks and Caicos Islands are subject to hurricanes. Severe hurricanes occurred in 1866, 1873, 1888, 1908, 1926, 1928 and 1945, the most severe being those of 1866 and 1945. Over £40,000 was spent in repairing damage done by the hurricane of 1945 and even this sum was inadequate to deal with more than part of the damage. Generous help was received from the British and Jamaica Governments and from subscribers in Jamaica, Bermuda and Nassau.

A number of endeavours have been made by means of subsidies to secure a regular steamer service with Jamaica but they have been short-lived, the first contract being with the Atlas Company in 1873. Since 1940 it has proved impossible to maintain any regular steamer service.

The first cable was landed at Grand Turk in 1898 by the Halifax and Bermuda Cable Company which later became known as the Direct West India Cable Company Ltd. In 1923 an inter-island radio service was inaugurated and was operated until 1941 when the Grand Turk station was taken over by Cable & Wireless Ltd., who also took over the Direct West India Cable Company's cables. The Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour stations, which work in conjunction with Cable and Wireless Ltd., are still operated by Government. It is believed that this was the first radio-telephone service to be operated by a British Dependency. Cable & Wireless Ltd. also established wireless connection with the Dominican Republic in 1941. A direct radio-telephone service between Grand Turk and Jamaica was opened by Cable & Wireless Ltd. on 1st December, 1947.

During the second world war an anti-aircraft battery was stationed at Grand Turk. The last garrison had been withdrawn over 80 years before when a detachment of the 1st West India Regiment under the command of Ensign Nolan was withdrawn to Nassau. A temporary air base was established by the United States Army Air Force on South Caicos Island in 1944 and an airstrip constructed. The base and strip were handed over to the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1947. A small airstrip for light aircraft was also constructed at Grand Turk during 1947.

On 31st August, 1947, the Right Honourable Arthur Creech Jones, M.P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Mrs. Creech Jones paid a brief visit to Grand Turk. This was the first visit ever made to this Dependency by one of His Majesty's Ministers, though the Dependency had been previously honoured by a visit by a member of the Royal family, His Royal Highness Prince George (later the Duke of Kent) having visited Grand Turk in 1928 in H.M.S. *Durban*, in which he was then serving as a lieutenant.

Chapter 3 : Administration

The Government of this Dependency is administered by a Commissioner who is also President of the Legislative Board. He is selected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and appointed by the Governor of Jamaica. Mr. C. E. Wool-Lewis assumed the duties of Commissioner in October, 1946.

There is a Legislative Board comprising the Commissioner and two official and three unofficial members appointed by the Governor of Jamaica.

There are a number of Government Boards, appointed by the Commissioner, which deal with various local matters. There is also a Salt Industry Board appointed by the Governor of Jamaica.

The Government of these islands is under the supervision of the Governor of Jamaica, whose assent to the Ordinances of the Legislative Board is required.

Certain laws of Jamaica are in express terms made applicable to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The seat of Government is at Grand Turk where the Commissioner resides.

Other settlements are Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos where there is a District Commissioner, and Salt Cay on the island of that name, where there is a Government Officer. There are 10 settlements in the Caicos Islands all of which are inhabited solely by people of African origin, and at each of which there is a District Constable.

During the year the Commissioner visited Cockburn Harbour and Salt Cay on a number of occasions. The difficulties of administering the scattered settlements of the Dependency were lessened by the purchase of a motor-launch for which a grant was provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. During 1947 and 1948 the launch was out of commission awaiting repairs. But a new launch has been purchased and is expected to arrive in the Dependency early in 1949.

District Boards have been established in four of the larger Caicos settlements to advise on public health, water supplies, communications and other matters of local interest. These Boards have already shown themselves to be of value and to provide a useful link between the people of remoter parts of the Dependency and Government.

The Commissioner visited Jamaica three times during the year in connection with plans for development and welfare, the re-organisation of the salt industry, and general administrative matters, and was in London for some months in connection with the Development and Salt Industry Plans.

Chapter 4: Weights and Measures

Imperial weights and measures are in use.

Chapter 5: Newspapers and Periodicals

No newspapers or periodicals are now published in the Dependency. The *Official Gazette* is published weekly.

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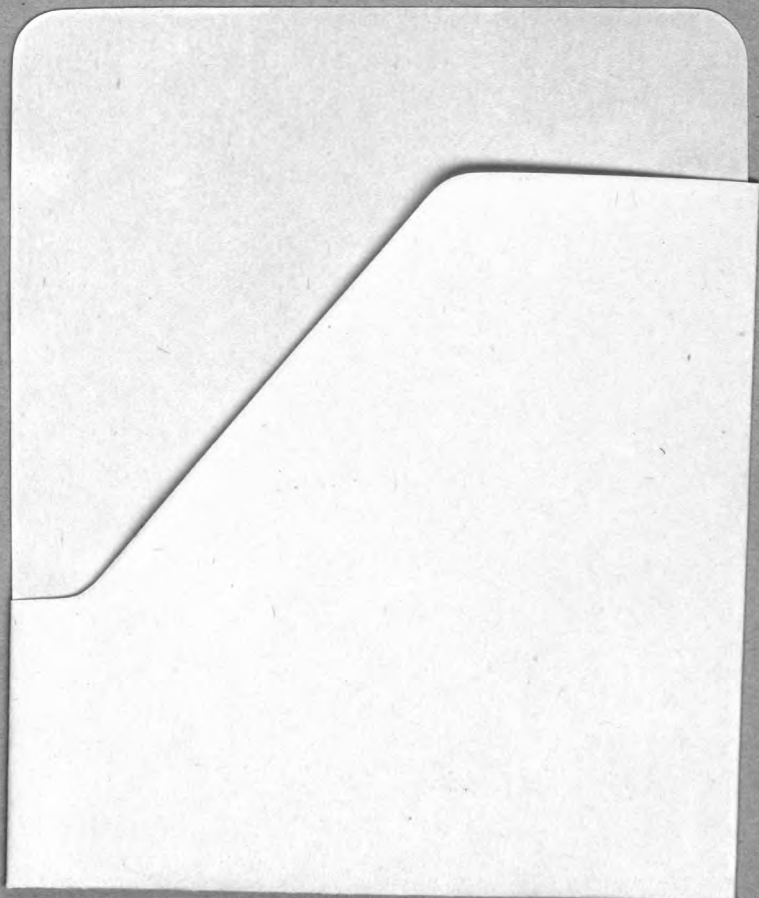
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